

*May 4 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998*

you cannot reform a reluctant bureaucratic system. Our children deserve better.

When the history of these schools is written on what is happening now and people look back on it, they will say one of the most important things that was done is they changed the way the laws work so someone could make a decision and then live with the consequences, good or bad. That has to be done. You cannot hope to do it.

But we're saying in Washington, if you pass our budget and another city wants to undertake the efforts that Chicago is making, we'll give you some funds, we'll help you, we'll bring in experts, we'll do everything we can, but you have to take responsibility for your children and your future, and you have to be responsible first.

So we have an agenda. The third point I want to make is, we're thinking about the long-term interest of the country. If you vote for Carol Moseley-Braun and she gets 6 more years—and I'll have by then, after that election, 2 more years—I'll tell you what I want to do. When I finish, I want to know that we've got a huge headstart on the long-term problems that will affect our country for the next 30 years.

What are they? We have to reform Social Security and Medicare for the 21st century for the baby boom generation. We've got to prove we can grow the economy without continuing to deplete the environment. We have to prove that we can bring the spark of enterprise and jobs and opportunity to these inner-city neighborhoods and isolated rural places and to Native Americans living on reservations that have felt none of this economic recovery, so we can say everybody's got a fair chance in America. We have to prove we can build the best education system in the world—not just universities but elementary and secondary schools. And we've got to prove we can live together as one America.

The other thing we have to do that I hope to persuade the American people I'm right about—I'm having a mixed record of success according to all the polls—is we have to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom. We have to continue to expand trade. We have to continue to stand up in places like Bosnia and Northern Ireland and Haiti. And the Secretary of State is in London today working for peace in the Middle East. We have to continue to do these things. And if we're going to do it, we have to pay our way. We have to pay our U.N. dues; we have to contribute to the International Monetary Fund. We can't say to people, we'd like to lead the world, but you pay the way. We're having a little fight in Washington, so we're not going to fulfill our responsibilities. This is an interdependent world, and our success depends upon our ability to be good, responsible partners.

So I'd like to focus on those things. We need positive forces in Congress to do that. The President is not a dictator, and much of what needs to be done requires a cooperative relationship between the President and Congress. So when you go home tonight, you say, "I went there because I'm grateful for what's happened and I support it; because they've got an agenda that they're working on even in this election year; because they're interested in the long-run problems of the country, and Carol Moseley-Braun is the best person to fight for those long-run solutions; and finally, because we love our country, and we want to do what's right by it."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to William Farley, chairman and chief executive officer, Fruit of the Loom, Inc., and his wife, Shelley, dinner hosts; Jim Levin, dinner cochair; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; and Todd Stern, Assistant to the President for Special Projects.

## Remarks at the Dedication of the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center

*May 5, 1998*

Thank you very much. Mrs. Reagan, Mr. Barram, Secretary Daley, Senator Moynihan,

Delegate Norton, Senator Dole, Senator Lott, all the Members of Congress and the diplomatic

corps who are here; Mr. Mayor; Secretary Shultz and General Powell and all the former members of the Reagan administration who are here and enjoying this great day; to Maureen and to the friends of President and Mrs. Reagan who are here. I'd like to begin by thanking Jim Freed and his team for a magnificent building. I think we all feel elevated in this building today.

I also want to say on behalf of Hillary and myself a special word of appreciation to Mrs. Reagan for being here. From her own pioneering efforts to keep our children safe from drugs to the elegance and charm that were the hallmarks of the Reagan White House, through her public and brave support for every family facing Alzheimer's, she has served our Nation exceedingly well, and we thank her.

The only thing that could make this day more special is if President Reagan could be here himself. But if you look at this atrium, I think we feel the essence of his presence: his unflagging optimism, his proud patriotism, his unabashed faith in the American people. I think every American who walks through this incredible space and lifts his or her eyes to the sky will feel that.

As Senator Moynihan just described, this building is the completion of a challenge issued 37 years ago by President Kennedy; I ought to say, and doggedly pursued for 37 years by Senator Moynihan. [*Laughter*] I must say, Senator, there were days when I drove by here week after week after week and saw only that vast hole in the ground, when I wondered if the "Moynihan hole" would ever become the Reagan Building. [*Laughter*] But sure enough, it did, and we thank you.

As you have heard, this building will house everything from an international trade center to international cultural activities to the Agency for International Development to the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. It is fitting that the plaza on which we gather bears the name of President Wilson. And it is fitting that Presidents Wilson and Reagan are paired, for their work and, therefore, the activities which will be culminated in this building span much of what has become the American century.

Since President Reagan left office, the freedom and opportunity for which he stood have continued to spread. For a half century, American leaders of both parties waged a cold war against aggression and oppression. Today, freed from the yoke of totalitarianism, new democ-

racies are emerging all around the world, enjoying newfound prosperity and long-awaited peace. More nations have claimed the fruits of this victory: free markets, free elections, plain freedom. And still more are struggling to do so.

Today we joy in that, but we cannot—indeed, we dare not—grow complacent. Today we recall President Reagan's resolve to fight for freedom and his understanding that American leadership in the world remains indispensable. It is fitting that a piece of the Berlin Wall is in this building. America's resolve and American ideals so clearly articulated by Ronald Reagan helped to bring that wall down.

But as we have seen repeatedly in the years since, the end of the cold war did not bring the end of the struggle for freedom and democracy, for human rights and opportunity. If the history of this American century has taught us anything, it is that we will either work to shape events or we will be shaped by them. We cannot be partly in the world. We cannot lead in fits and starts or only when we believe it suits our short-term interests. We must lead boldly, consistently, without reservation, because, as President Reagan repeatedly said, freedom is always in America's interests.

Our security and prosperity depend upon our willingness to be involved in the world. Woodrow Wilson said that Americans were participants in the life of the world, like it or not. But his countrymen did not listen to him, and as a result, there came the Great Depression, the rise of fascism, the Second World War. Our Nation then learned we could not withdraw from the world.

Then a new generation of Americans reached outward in the years after World War II, building new alliances of peace and new engines of prosperity: NATO, the United Nations, the IMF, the international trading system. It is no accident that during this period of great American leadership abroad we experienced unparalleled economic prosperity here at home. And it is no accident that freedom's great triumph came on America's watch.

Today, on the edge of a new century, the challenges we face are more diverse. But the values that guide America must remain the same. The globalization of commerce and the explosion of communications technology do not resolve all conflicts between nations; indeed, they create new challenges. They do not diminish our responsibility to lead, therefore; instead,

May 5 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

they heighten it. Because today's possibilities are not tomorrow's guarantees, we must remain true to the commitment to lead that every American leader of both parties, especially Ronald Reagan and Woodrow Wilson, so clearly articulated in this 20th century.

For 50 years we fought for a Europe undivided and free. Last week the United States Senate took a profoundly important step toward that goal by welcoming Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO, an achievement I believe that would make Ronald Reagan proud. The alliance that helped to keep the peace for a half century now brings us closer than ever to that dream of a Europe united, democratic, and at peace.

Now Congress has other opportunities to fulfill the spirit and honor the legacy of the man whose name we affix to this building today. Congress has the opportunity to maintain our leadership by paying for our support to the IMF and settling our dues to the United Nations. I hope they will do it.

President Reagan once said we had made what he called an unbreakable commitment to the IMF, one that was unbreakable because, in this age of economic interdependence, an investment in the IMF is simply an investment in American prosperity. And we fought for 50 years for peace and security as part of the United Nations. In 1985, Ronald Reagan said the U.N. stands as the symbol of the hopes of all mankind for a more peaceful and productive world. "We must not," he said, "disappoint those hopes." We still must not disappoint those hopes.

President Reagan understood so clearly that America could not stand passively in the face of great change. He understood we had to em-

brace the obligations of leadership to build a better future for all. The commerce that will be conducted in this great building will be a testament to the opportunities in a truly global economy America has done so much to create. The academic and cultural activities that will be generated from people who work here will bring us closer together as well. Because the Agency for International Development will be here, we will never forget that the spark of enterprise and opportunity should be brought to the smallest, poorest villages in the world, for there, too, there are people of energy, intelligence, and hunger for freedom.

This is a great day for our country. This is a day of honoring the legacy of President Reagan, remembering the service of President Wilson, and rededicating ourselves to the often difficult but, ultimately, always rewarding work of America.

As I stand within the Reagan Building, I am confident that we will again make the right choices for America, that we will take up where President Reagan left off, to lead freedom's march boldly into the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. in the atrium of the Ronald Reagan Building. In his remarks, he referred to former First Lady Nancy Reagan; General Services Administrator David J. Barram; former Senator Bob Dole; Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., of Washington, DC; former Secretary of State George P. Shultz; former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth; Maureen Reagan, daughter of former President Ronald Reagan; and architect James I. Freed.

## Statement on the Annie E. Casey Foundation Report on Child Care

May 5, 1998

I want to commend the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its *KIDS COUNT Data Book* which highlights the need for safe and affordable child care for millions of America's working families. The report, released today, provides important evidence of the child care challenges facing families, businesses, and the economy.

*KIDS COUNT* reports that every day parents of 29 million children struggle to find safe and affordable child care so that they can go to work. The challenge is especially great for the working parents of 10 million children in low-income families. The report tells us that this need continues to grow; that child care is